

MAR 95

SECRET

~~SECRET~~

[REDACTED] COMMENTED THAT REGARDLESS OF INTERNATIONAL PRESSURE AND LOOMING SANCTIONS, THE GUATEMALAN ARMY WILL IN NO UNCERTAIN TERMS HOLD TO ITS OFFICIAL ACCOUNT OF THE EVENTS OF MARCH 1992, WHEREBY BAHACA WAS KILLED IN THE COURSE OF A FIREFIGHT WITH AN ARMY PATROL. [REDACTED] ADDED THAT THE ARMY LEADERSHIP BASES THE DECISION TO CONTINUE TO SUPPORT THE OFFICIAL ACCOUNT ON PRINCIPLE, AND WILL NOT BE FORCED TO RETRACT ITS ACCOUNT OR PROVIDE FURTHER DETAILS ON THE CASE. [REDACTED] GRANTED THAT ARMY LEADERS HAVE HANDLED THE CASE POORLY SINCE BAHACA'S CAPTURE AND UNTIL THE PRESENT.

[REDACTED]

IF THE BAHACA CASE HAD BEEN HANDLED DIFFERENTLY IN ITS INITIAL STAGES AND THEN NOT MADE THE CORNERSTONE OF INTERNATIONAL CRITICISM OF GUATEMALA, THE ARMY WOULD HAVE BEEN MORE INCLINED TO RECOUNT THE EVENTS AS THEY ACTUALLY OCCURRED. THE ARMY MIGHT THEN HAVE ATTRIBUTED THE EXECUTION OF THE GUERRILLA LEADER TO NORMAL WARTIME ACTIVITY, INSTEAD OF ATTEMPTING TO COVER-UP A POLITICAL SCANDAL WITH FAR REACHING REPERCUSSIONS.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

SECRET.>

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~